

Philately and the Titanic, Then and Now

It should come as no surprise that the postal administrations of the world chose to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the sinking of RMS *Titanic*. If anything, the surprise comes in the form of how *few* nations participated. Further, there was almost no philatelic coverage when the tragedy occurred in 1912.

This Stamp News Now article is a combination of the *Mekeel's Weekly* coverage given the sinking in 1912 and now. (If you are new to Stamp News Publishing, *Mekeel's* was founded in 1891 and in 1912 was the leading commercially published stamp periodical in the United States.)

We begin with our coverage in the April 27, 2012 and May 11, 2012 issues of *Mekeel's & STAMPS* (STAMPS being the U.S. based periodical that was founded in 1932 and merged with *Mekeel's* when we acquired it in 1995).

Our 2012 coverage included a reprint of the *Mekeel's* articles from 1912 and 1913, my own commentary on the lack of coverage, and then articles on new stamp issues from Canada Post and the Isle of Man—the latter in our May 11, 2012 issue.

But there is more to the story, and we continue it on subsequent pages.

From Mekeel's & STAMPS Magazine, April 27, 2012:

From the Publisher's Desk

by John F. Dunn



Titanic Coverage

In this issue we feature special coverage of the sinking of RMS *Titanic*. As part of our coverage, I went back to *Mekeel's Weekly* issues from that time, and include it in our coverage.

What surprised me was how little coverage there was at the time of the disaster. As I think about it, I do understand that

Mekeel's focused on all things philatelic, so they were “sticking to their last.” But with more than 1,500 lives lost, the largest ship afloat going down in a matter of a couple of hours, with many prominent people on board, I would have expected more commentary than there was. As best I can tell, what I present in this issue is all that appeared in *Mekeel's* in 1912 and 1913.

The minimal coverage in *Mekeel's* was primarily about the registered mail. As it turns out, almost all of the mail went down with the ship. I might be wrong, but I think I read that just three pieces that were on board survive. There are a few more pieces of mail that were dropped off, primarily at stops at Cherbourg, France, and Queenstown, Ireland, before the ship steamed out to sea.

This also may explain why the sinking of the *Titanic* is not as prominent to today's collectors as it otherwise might be. Contrast it with the *Hindenburg*. We are regularly reminded of that disaster in part because we see

examples of charred mail that survived the fire.

In both instances, there have not been a lot of new issues released to commemorate those events. Part of our coverage in this issue involves Canada Post's program, well done and justifiable because *Titanic* sunk off the coast of Newfoundland and its citizens were prominent in rescue efforts.

As I recall, most of the *Titanic* stamp issues of the past were released by third world nations commemorating and capitalizing on the *film*, not the ship and the disaster itself.

The same, in fact to an even greater extent, is true for the *Hindenburg*, which was featured on stamps *before* the disaster, but not very much after that event. There was no epic disaster film in the past couple of decades, so the philatelic commercialization of the event has not been possible.

As far as present day *Titanic* coverage, we have the Canada Post new issue and an exhibit a National Postal Museum exhibit

that I mention in the text, but is worth highlighting here as well. “Posted Aboard RMS *Titanic*”, which focuses on the handling of the mail on board and the courageous postal clerks who went down with the ship, can be accessed at <http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/titanic/>.

I am not sure why the U.S. Postal Service chose not to commemorate the centennial of the *Titanic*, considering that there were so many Americans on board, so many immigrants coming to New York on the ship, and how prominent the event remains in the consciousness of the American public.

I will leave it up to you to review the USPS 2012 program...and tell me that every one of those commemorative issues deserves a 2012 stamp more than the *Titanic*.



Philatelic Coverage of RMS *Titanic*

While the sinking of RMS *Titanic* made headlines and subsequently held the attention of hundreds of millions of people since it took place on April 15, 1912, it has garnered surprising little philatelic attention.

On page 17 we feature one of the few issues from major nations that recognize the centennial of the disaster, that being a program from Canada Post. There are a few others, but most recognition over the years has been recent issues from third world nations for sale to collectors, many of them on the theme of the movie, rather than the original event.

Even in 1912 when it took place, while the event made headlines across the nation, little was written in the American philatelic press. In our own *Mekeel's Weekly*, we find three entries:

- From the April 27, 1912 issue, "EDITORIAL. *No Time Lost*—The postoffice department rose to the emergency caused by the loss of the *Titanic* with prompt and effective measures. Almost as soon as the news of the disaster was confirmed, the postmasters in the large cities received a telegram notifying them that the S. S. *Lapland*, instead of the *Titanic* would convey the mails that were to have been carried by the *Titanic* which was scheduled to sail on its return trip from New York on April 20th. The *Lapland* will leave on that date. It is probable that in the immense volume of mail that was transported on the *Titanic* there were letters destined for Philatelists in America but let us hope that any loss of the kind has been relatively small.

"*Special P. O. D. Order*—The celerity with which the postal officers moved to bring order out of the chaotic conditions is exemplified by the following special order issued from Washington so early as April 18th:

'Among the millions of pieces of mail matter carried on the lost R.M.S. *Titanic*, there were doubtless thousands of dollars' worth of international money orders, together with descriptive lists of such orders. It is assumed that many of the remitters of those orders will communicate with the payees in this country concerning them, and that these payees, in turn, will take up the matter through their respective postmasters.

"It is the earnest desire of the Department that in all such cases postmasters give careful attention to the inquiries made and promptly report the facts to the Third Assistant Postmaster General (Division of Money Orders), to the end that every effort may be made to insure early payment to the intended beneficiaries.

JAMES J. BRITT,
Third Asst. P. M. Gen."

- From the May 18, 2012 issue: "MAIL LOST ON THE *TITANIC*":



"Post office authorities are unable to estimate the value of the mail matter lost upon the *Titanic*. It is known that 3,423 bags of mail matter were carried by the ship, but unless some sort of statement is made by the English and foreign postal authorities, no estimate of the loss can be made.

"In the case of money sent in regular letters, without registering, the loss will never be made public. As the standard ocean mailbag holds about 2,000 letters,

it is estimated that in all about 7,000,000 pieces of mail matter have been lost.

"Of the 3,423 bags of mail in the hold of the *Titanic*, about 200 bags contained registered matter. These sacks contained, on an average, about 8,000 letters each. It is estimated that, approximately, 1,600,000 registered letters and packages have gone to the bottom.

"Three of the five postal clerks aboard the *Titanic* were in the employ of the United States postal service. They were: J. S. March, of Newark, N.J.; O.S. Woodie, of Washington and W.L. Gwyn, of Brooklyn. The other clerks were employed by the English mail service."

Finally, almost a year later, from the March 1, 2013 issue: "REGISTERED MAIL ON THE '*TITANIC*.' We wish to draw the attention of clients from whom we have received enquiries respecting the consignments lost with the *Titanic* to the following extract from a letter sent us by the Postmaster-General:—"I am directed to inform you that the loss of the mails on board the Packet *Titanic* is now found to have been due to causes beyond control. No indemnity is payable by this Department in respect of the loss of a registered packet sent to a place abroad when the loss has arisen from causes beyond control (e. g., tempest, shipwreck, etc.), and it is regretted that in these circumstances no claim in respect of the registered packets in question can be entertained."

"*Posted Aboard R.M.S. Titanic*"

The best coverage for many collectors is that provided by the National Postal Museum. The Museum presents the story of the valiant attempt to save the mail in an exhibit titled "Posted Aboard R.M.S. *Titanic*". The exhibit, which is accessible at <http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/titanic/>, includes objects belonging to two of the five sea post clerks who perished aboard the ship while trying to protect the mail.

When the exhibit opened in 1999, James H. Bruns, who at the time was the director of the National Postal Museum, stated, "What most people do not realize is that R.M.S. *Titanic* was a 'Royal Mail Ship'. Three American and two British sea post clerks perished attempting to save the ship's mail."



At Queenstown, Ireland, a mountain of mailbags and trunks are ready for loading as passengers board Titanic.

The images on this page are from "Posted Aboard R.M.S. *Titanic*." The 1999 announcement from the NPM stated, "This exhibit focuses on that aspect of the disaster. It includes objects found on the bodies of two of the clerks, including the keys to *Titanic*'s mailbags, four *Titanic* facing slips, the travel authorization assigning Oscar Scott Woody to *Titanic*, and the gold pocket watch of sea post clerk John Starr March.

"In a bitter twist of irony, Woody and his colleagues were celebrating the approach of his 44th birthday at the stern of the ship when it struck the iceberg. Woody would die on his birthday.

"In the final hours of April 14, 1912, the five postal clerks, along with steward Albert Tessinger, desperately tried to save the mail sacks by dragging them to the upper decks and possible safety. When Tessinger finally abandoned the seemingly suicidal task, the postal clerks were still frantically at work, waist-deep in water. Tessinger was the only survivor to recall seeing the mail clerks alive, leading some *Titanic* historians to believe that they were among the first to perish that night, probably meeting their deaths inside the mailroom. The bodies of two of the sea post clerks — John Starr March and Oscar Scott Woody — were subsequently recovered at sea, and their personal effects form the basis for this exhibit.

This 24-inch metal chain, with its large Eagle mailbag lock key and two smaller keys, was attached to Oscar Scott Woody's belt when his body was recovered. One side of the large key is stamped "Sea Post" and "101."



"Exhibit highlights include the following items:

"The *Titanic*'s mailbag key and chain...: The 24-inch metal chain and three keys were attached to Oscar Scott Woody's belt when his body was recovered at sea.

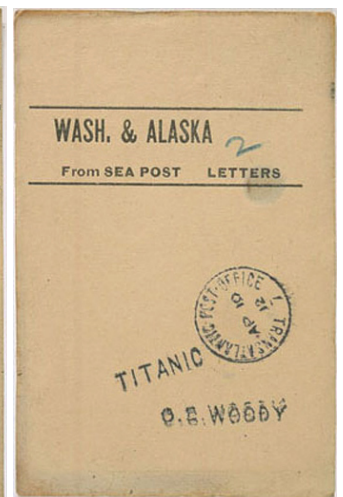
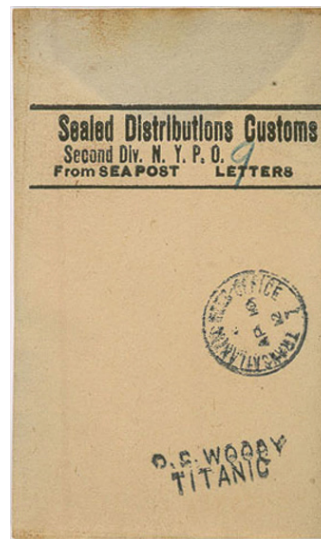
"Woody's Travel orders (not shown here): Sea post clerk Oscar Scott Woody received his travel orders on April 1, 1912, instructing him to proceed to Southampton for service aboard R.M.S. *Titanic*. The travel order was found in the pocket of his coat when his body was recovered at sea.

"Facing slips: Four of the ten known facing slips found on Oscar Scott Woody's body are featured in the exhibit. Such slips were used to help separate the mail that was sorted in transit....

"March's pocket watch (not shown here): The gold pocket watch that was found on John Starr March's body stopped working at 1:27a.m. on the morning of April 15, 1912."



American sea post clerks, like Oscar Scott Woody, earned about \$1,000 a year. This salary was considered a small fortune by the standards of the times, especially since sea post clerks traveled aboard luxurious vessels, took their meals in a separate dining room and were allotted an allowance for their board while in a foreign country.



Among the items in Oscar Scott Woody's suit coat that night was a quantity of facing slips. Prior to the accident, Woody placed facing slips, like these, on top of individual bundles of mail to indicate their destination. The facing slips also enabled postal officials to keep track of sorting errors. As required of all sea post clerks, Woody stamped his name on his slips so that any errors in distribution could specifically be charged to him. These "N.Y.P.O." and "Wash. & Alaska" facing slips were among those found on Oscar Scott Woody's body when it was recovered at sea.

From Mekeel's & STAMPS Magazine, April 27, 2012:

Canada Post Marks Titanic Sinking Centennial



RMS *Titanic* was the largest ship afloat at the time of her maiden voyage. After leaving Southampton, England on April 10, 1912, *Titanic* called at Cherbourg in France and Queenstown, Ireland before heading west towards New York. On April 14, 1912, about 375 miles south of Newfoundland, she hit an iceberg. The glancing collision caused *Titanic*'s hull plates to buckle inward in a number of locations on her starboard side and opened five of her sixteen watertight compartments to the sea. Over the next two and a half hours, the ship gradually filled with water and sank. Her sinking caused the deaths of 1,514 people in one of the deadliest peacetime maritime disasters in history.

On April 5 Canada Post issued five stamps to mark the centennial of the sinking of RMS *Titanic*. The collection, created by Haligonian design team of Dennis Page and Oliver Hill, showcases the best-known ship in the world and adds some poignant Canadian attributes.

Canadians, and the citizens of Halifax, Nova Scotia, in particular, played a central role in the *Titanic* recovery efforts. "To this day, Canada, and especially Halifax, has an enduring and remarkably human connection to the *Titanic* story," said Peter MacKay, Minister of National Defense and Regional Minister for Nova Scotia. "The Canadian legacy of the *Titanic* still resonates strongly with everyone."

Creating a detailed image of a ship that has been under water for a century presented a challenge for Halifax-based designer Dennis Page. "This was the biggest man-made moving object on earth that after setting off on her maiden voyage hit an iceberg and ended in disaster. That really stuck with me and how I was going to show that feeling." Page basically put himself in the moment. "I imagined myself standing below her bow looking up, which really gives that vantage point and perspective at how vast something like this could be."

In addition to marking an event in which so many lost their lives, the *Titanic* issue honors the many Canadians who helped in the recovery mission. "This is really our way of paying tribute to the Canadians involved," says Mary Traversy, Canada Post's

Senior Vice-President of Mail. "With these stamps, we hope to preserve the legacy of the Canadians whose lives were deeply touched when *Titanic* sank off our coast."

The *Titanic* stamp collection is composed of five stamps, a stamp pane, a souvenir sheet, an uncut press sheet, prepaid postcards, framed prints, a collectible album and a stamp and coin collector envelope.

The four Permanent domestic-rate stamps come as two pairs of se-tenant stamps. Two show the *Titanic*'s bow and the other two feature the stern. The stern stamps are available only on the pane of 16 stamps, which includes eight stern stamps and eight bow stamps. The bow stamps are also available in a booklet of 10 as well as on the pane of 16 stamps.

The international rate stamp features a full-color side illustration of the *Titanic*, sailing on a calm ocean with a layered map showing relevant locations. It is available in a booklet of six stamps, a souvenir sheet and a limited edition uncut press sheet.

There also are two Official First Day Covers. The first features a photo from Father Brown's collection of the captain of the *Titanic* walking on the deck with the bow and the stern stamps. The second cover makes use of the international denomination stamp and features a photo of a paper boy in New York City announcing the disaster.

Additional information about Canadian stamps can be found in the news section of Canada Post's website, and photos of these new stamps are also available. Stamps and other products will be available at participating Canadian post offices, or can be ordered online by following the links at canadapost.ca/collecting, or by mail order from Canada's National Philatelic Center; from Canada and the USA, call toll-free 1-800-565-4362, and from other countries, call 902 863-6550.

Titanic Theme Continues with IOM Program

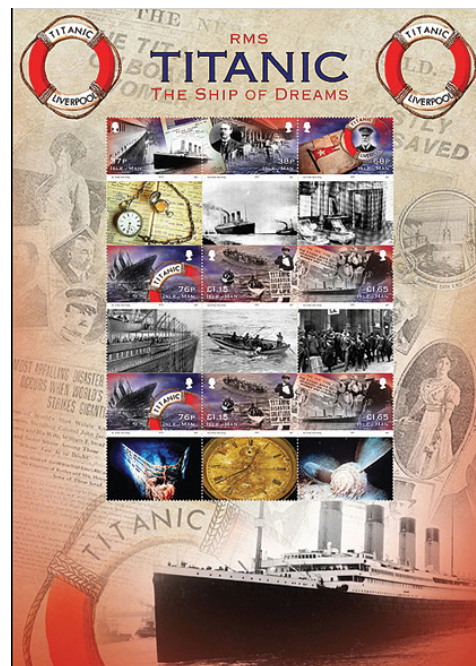
On April 15 the Isle of Man Post Office issued stamps and souvenir sheets for the 100th Anniversary of one of the deadliest maritime disasters in peacetime history. Billed as the largest and most luxurious ship in the world, *Titanic* was on her maiden voyage from Southampton to New York.

The trip had begun on April 10 when 914 passengers boarded the liner with 884 members of crew. At midday *Titanic* steamed into the Channel and headed for Cherbourg, where a further 274 passengers joined the voyage and then on to Queenstown, in southern Ireland, where they picked up a further 136 passengers and the Irish mail.

At 1.30pm on 11th April, *Titanic* headed into the Atlantic for what was expected to be a six-day voyage. At 11.39pm lookout Fred Fleet spotted the iceberg looming in the dark. He rang the bell three times and telephoned the bridge. First Officer Murdoch immediately gave the order "hard-a-starboard" and signalled the engine room "stop" but the liner was cruising at 22 knots and within a minute it had struck the iceberg. Captain Edward John Smith rushed to the bridge. After inspecting the damage, it was clear that the ship was doomed: although there was only a small hole, the iceberg had buckled the steel plates and sheered the rivets below the waterline; water was spilling over the bulkheads, flooding the first six compartments and weighing the box down.

At 12.05am, the order was given to uncover the lifeboats. Eighteen lifeboats were launched—the first not until 12.45am; the last at 2.05am. By 2.15am the bridge was under water and the forward funnel collapsed. Within five minutes the *Titanic* gave a sudden lurch and threw the two remaining lifeboats into the sea. There was a rumbling like thunder from the bowels of the ship and at 2.20am the lights went out and the *Titanic* sank, plunging more than 1,500 people into the icy sea.

The Isle of Man issue is available in a set of six stamps, two sheetlets of 15, a souvenir sheet (shown) with the stamps as well as non-stamp labels with additional images of the ship and its sinking, a Presentation Pack with the set of six and extra images, a First Day Cover, and a Souvenir Folder. For additional information or to purchase the stamps at face value as well as the other Isle of Man *Titanic* philatelic products, go to <http://www.wopa-stamps.com/>.



On the pages that follow we provide additional Stamp News Now coverage, gleaned from incoming news announcements as well as a result of our own web searches and research.

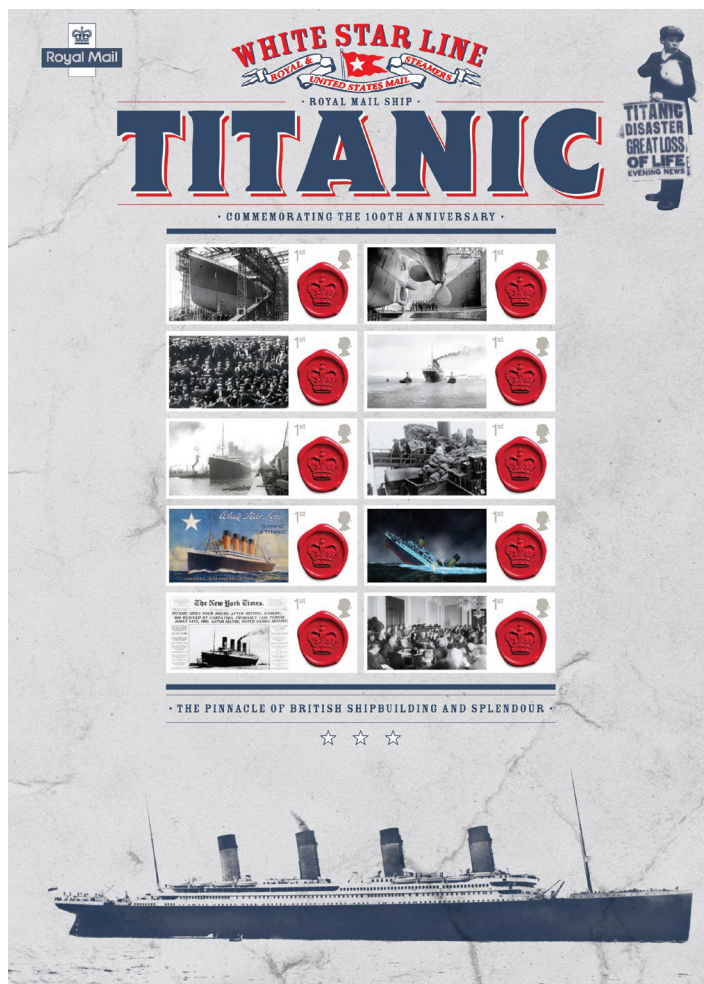
British Royal Mail Issues Titanic “Smiler”

The name belies the seriousness of the subject, but Smiler Stamps® is a designation Royal Mail uses for personalized stamps in which the postage stamp is accompanied by a pictorial label.

On April 10, Royal Mail issued a commemorative sheet that carries ten first-class stamps, each with the “crown seal” Smiler® stamp and a label alongside featuring a variety of images of the *Titanic* story, such as her construction in the Belfast dockyards, the launch, the crew, her departure from Southampton at noon on 10 April 1912, White Star Line publicity, *The New York Times* headline and the public enquiry that followed the disaster. The sheet background shows the White Star Line emblem at the top and a *Titanic* picture below the stamps.

The history of the *Titanic* and Royal Mail are closely interlinked, as the ship was commissioned to carry mail and so the letters RMS (Royal Mail Ship) were used in the ship’s name. On 10 April 1912, when the grand new White Star Line liner set sail from Southampton on its maiden voyage to New York with 2,223 people on board, travelling among them were two British postal workers together with three counterparts from the U.S. Postal Service, and hundreds of thousands of pieces of mail.

The five postal workers were Americans Oscar Scott Woody, John Starr March, and William Logan Gwinn and British postal workers James Bertram Williamson and John Richard Jago Smith, and their appointment to this trip was a great honor. They valiantly tried to save the 200 sacks of registered mail when the *Titanic* collided with an iceberg four days later, but all five individuals were among the more than 1,500 people who went down with the ship.



A Selection of Other 2012 Issues

by John F. Dunn

Needless to say, the 2012 *Titanic* stamp issues range from closely related to totally not relevant. Among those that needed an explanation was this issue from Åland, an autonomous region under the aegis of Finland in the Baltic Sea.

As it turns out, there is a poignant story that connects Åland to the Titanic. We found it on the www.wopa-stamps.com website:

"The date 15 April 1912 is highly associated with the ocean-going steamship *Titanic* that struck an iceberg on her maiden voyage from Southampton on her way to New York City and sank in the Atlantic Ocean.

"...Commemorating that 100 years have passed since this catastrophe, Åland Post presents a stamp in April 2012 on the theme Titanic 100 years.

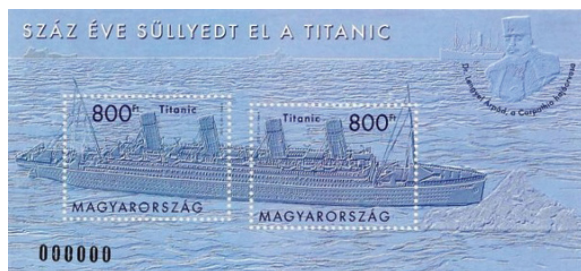
"A total of 2207 persons were on board the Titanic, 231 of whom were of Nordic descent. Many were emigrating to America, seeking their fortune in a new country. Three of the passengers came from Åland. None of the three Ålanders survived when the ship struck an iceberg and sank. One of them was Ivar Berglund from Sund. Born on 24 June 1890, he was 21 years old. Before boarding in Southampton, he sent a postcard to his family. The message was written in some type of coded Swedish, since he had spelled the words backwards.

"The translated message reads: 'Seeing that I have time now I must tell you that I'm here in Southampton now on Whit Monday. 'N' tomorrow I will see the eye-doctor 'n' Wednesday I will board this boat on the other side. So that I will be in New York before next Monday. My journey has gone fine all the way. Although I have been alone... I'm now at the hotel where they play just like at Gröna Lund in Stockholm. Give my regards to everyone, brother'."

No doubt Berglund's feelings were shared by many others who did not survive the sinking, but never had a chance to send one last message to their loved ones.

* * * * *

There are others of varying relevance, including this one from Hungary.



"Magyar Posta is issuing an exclusive commemorative stamp block in memory of the Titanic and Dr Árpád Lengyel, the ship's doctor on the first vessel to hurry to the aid of the Titanic, the British steamship RMS *Carpathia*. The main motif of this unusual philatelic product is the *Titanic* heading towards the iceberg, while the stamps show parts of the liner. In the top right corner there is a portrait of Dr Lengyel and the outline of RMS *Carpathia*.

"...Although the Titanic was the largest and most elegant vessel on the transatlantic route, it was not the fastest, which jeopardised the planned arrival in New York on 16 April 1912. For this reason it steamed full ahead and did not try to avoid the potentially dangerous area of drifting ice. At 11.40 pm on 14 April the watch spotted a floating iceberg....A long time passed before the gigantic vessel slowly began to turn, and so the iceberg punctured a series of fatal holes below the waterline on the starboard side of the ship. The captain immediately sent distress signals....

"RMS *Carpathia* heard the Mayday but was too far from the scene to offer immediate help. The Titanic sank at 2.20 am on 15 April. The people in the lifeboats were picked up by the *Carpathia* about 75 minutes later. A few of the Hungarian passengers on the Titanic survived, such as Mátyás Reischl, a waiter in one of the first class restaurants, and the Hungarian emigrants Lujza Hoffer, and Antal Kisik and his wife. The ship's doctor of the *Carpathia*, which hurried to the Titanic's aid, was Dr Árpád Lengyel, who did all within his power to save the survivors, endangered by hypothermia. The survivors gave him a medallion in gratitude."

Among the more far-fetched stamp issues, the stamp issu-



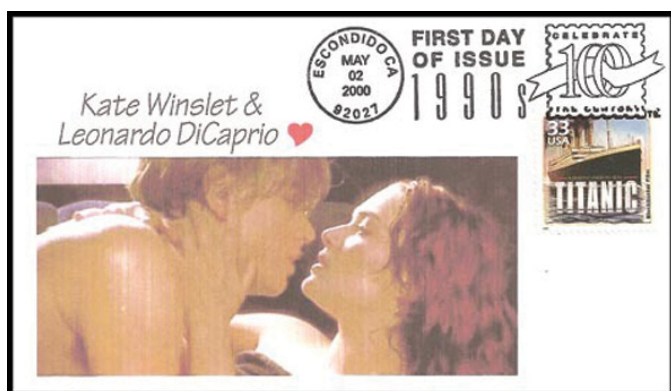
ing entities of Africa and other third world nations stand out. Nevertheless, if you are forming a *Titanic* collection, you may want to include one or more of them, because some are very well designed.

This set of six from Madagascar, the island nation and former French Colony, located in the Indian Ocean off the south-eastern coast of Africa. The set dramatically re-enacts some of the key moments from the final minutes of the *Titanic*.

Earlier Titanic Stamps

There are not very many pre-2012 stamps that were issued to specifically commemorate the sinking of the *Titanic*. Instead, most issues you find will have been released in conjunction with the 1998 movie, that has been described as 'more love story than ship sinking'.

Here we see a First Day Cover for the United States Celebrate the Century stamp, Scott 31911, that was issued to commemorate not the sinking, but the movie about the sinking.



You might wonder what this next image, Newfoundland Scott 196, issued in 1932, has to do with the *Titanic*. For the explanation I give credit to <http://secretstostampcollecting.com/members/tag/titanic-stamps/>.

"In 1904, the first wireless station in Newfoundland was built at Cape Race. This was the only land-based location that received the distress call from the RMS *Titanic*.

"On the night *Titanic* sank, wireless operator Jack Phillips was sending telegraphs to Cape Race for relay to New York City. When Cyril Evans, wireless operator of the SS *Californian*, sent an iceberg warning to *Titanic*, only a few miles away, Phillips was annoyed with the loud signal (due to the proximity) and responded 'Shut up, Shut up, I'm working Cape Race.'

"This would become a famous incident, as the bored Evans soon went to sleep, and *Titanic* hit an iceberg only fifteen minutes later. After *Titanic*'s distress call, Cape Race played a major role in relaying news of the sinking to other ships and land locations."

I leave it to you to decide which stamp is more relevant to the history of the sinking, the U.S. *The Titanic* movie stamp or the Newfoundland Cape Race stamp.



Halifax, Nova Scotia became a center of activity for rescue and recovery operations. "The Halifax Connection" is covered at <http://titanic.gov.ns.ca>, a site maintained by Nova Scotia's Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

The site is an excellent resource for the history, artifacts and archives surrounding the events of April 14, 1912 and the immediate hours and days that followed. Among the artifacts is a record of wireless communications at that time. From the site, we find this:

"On April 14, 1912, Walter Gray, Jack Goodwin and Robert Hunston were on duty at the Marconi Company wireless station at Cape Race, Newfoundland, about 400 nautical miles from the site where RMS *Titanic* sank. Mr. Goodwin first received the vessel's distress signal and as wireless traffic exploded, Mr. Hunston tracked the unfolding tragedy with this summarized record of wireless messages."

This would be the wireless station referred to above by *Titanic* wireless operator Jack Phillips, when he told *Californian* wireless operator Cyril Evans, "Shut up, Shut up, I'm working Cape Race." From his abruptness, it would seem that the *Titanic* already had struck the iceberg and Phillips was busy sending distress signals. In any event, among the images on the Nova Scotia website is Hunston's record of wireless messages. We show here the beginning and the end of the transcript and refer you to <http://titanic.gov.ns.ca> for the full record as well as for more images and information.

The *Titanic* Disaster as viewed from Cape Race by Wireless.
 April 14th 1912.
 EST 10 25pm E.S.T. Jack Goodwin on watch hears *Titanic* calling C.Q.D. giving position 41 46N 50 24W. About 380 miles S.S.E. of Cape Race.
 .35 *Titanic* gives corrected position as 41 46N 50 14W. A matter of 50 or six miles difference. He says "have struck iceberg".
 .40 *Titanic* calls *Carpathia* and says "we require immediate assistance".
 .41 Gray on duty.
 .43 *Titanic* gives same information to *Californian* giving *Titanic*'s position.
 .45 *Carpathia* circulates same information broadcast to *Baltic* and all ships.

12 50am *Virginian* says last he heard of *Titanic* was at 12.27 when callers signals were blurred and ended abruptly.
 From now on boats working amongst themselves relative to *Titanic* disaster. Nothing more heard from *Titanic*.

Titanic Shipwreck Covers?

In my research I have seen reference to three covers having survived the sinking of the *Titanic*, but I was unable to find any examples that were specifically identified as such. There are a few pieces of mail that were carried on the maiden voyage, but were taken off the ship before she set out across the Atlantic, as they were addressed to recipients in Europe or the United Kingdom.

Any such covers that survived the sinking would be treasured by collectors. The collecting of Shipwreck Covers is a specialty that has its own avid following. There is an organization, The Wreck & Crash Mail Society, <http://wreckandcrash.org>, that brings together collectors of shipwreck covers as well as covers that survived all manner of disasters.

In my search for an example of a representative shipwreck cover, I came across the example shown at the right, from the collection of the Bath, England, Postal Museum, <http://www.bathpostalmuseum.co.uk/>, accompanied by this description:

"The American steamer *Dakota* was wrecked on 3rd March 1907, two miles from Noshima Lighthouse, near Tokyo, Japan, while on a voyage from Seattle for Yokahoma and Hong Kong. Most of the mails were saved by 7th March. 80 bags out of 299 were washed ashore: 20,000 ordinary letters, 533 Registered. The vessel finally broke up at the end of May. The handstamp on the cover in magenta reads DAMAGED MAIL FROM/S.S DAKOTA WRECKED. This ambulance envelope left New York on February 8th 1907 containing a damaged letter after being salvaged, it arrived in Manilla on March 22nd, 1907."

